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BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Paper No. 17

Application Number: 09/625,518
Filing Date: July 25, 2000
Appellant(s): WEISSMAN ET AL.

_____

Fabio E. Marino
<u>For Appellant</u>

EXAMINER'S ANSWER

This is in response to the appeal brief filed on 03/12/2004, in which the following has

been entered.

(1)   **Real Party in Interest**

The real party in interest is the assignee of the present application, which is E.piphany,

Inc. of San Mateo, California.

(2)   **Related Appeals and Interferences**

To the best of Applicants' knowledge, no related appeals nor interferences are pending.

(3)   **Status of the Claims**

Claims I through 47 are currently pending. Claims I through 47 are appealed.

(4)   **Status of Amendments After Final Rejection**

The after final amendment filed on 9/16/2003 has been entered by the examiner in the

Advisory Action (paper no 12) mailed on 10/17/2003.

(5)   **Summary of the Invention**

The summary of the invention contained in the brief is correct.

(6)   **Grouping of claims**

Claims 1-47 stand or fall together as group 1, and claim 1 is the representative claim for

this group.

(7)   **Issues**

Whether claim I is patentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341 issued to Smiley

("Smiley") in view of "Index Interface Links CASE and IBM's DB2," by Feuche

("Feuche").

(8)   **Claims Appealed**

The copy of the appealed claims contained in the Appendix to the brief is correct.

(9) Prior Art of Record

The following is a listing of the prior art of record relied upon in the rejection of claims

under appeal.

U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341	Smiley	07-17-2001
Index interface links CASE and IBM's DB2	Feuche	10-24-1988

(10)   **Grounds of Rejection**

The following ground(s) of rejection are applicable to the appealed claims:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

2.   Claims 1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 17, 18, 21, 22, 26, 27, 29-31, 36, 38, 39, 43 and 44 are

rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No.

6,263,341), and further in view of Feuche, ("Index interface links CASE and IBM's

DB2").

With respect to claim 1, Smiley discloses a method ... comprising:

the computer accessing a definition of the system, the definition defining a

schema for use by the system (col. 4 lines 20-30, "The OBJECTS include ATTRIBUTES

20, which are technical definitions of data modeled in some computer application.

ATTRIBUTES 20 are elementary data definitions such as product name, customer

number, employee number, and other data which are of interest to the enterprise.

Another OBJECT 12 is ENTITY 21, which is a logical collection of ATTRIBUTES 20.

ENTITY 21 CONTAINS 22 ATTRIBUTE 20. CONTAINS relationship 22 documents the

one-to-many relationship that each ENTITY 21 has with the attributes it contains.");

the schema defining a set of tables, a set of columns that correspond to the set

of tables, and a set of relationships between the tables of the set of tables (col. Lines 8-

11, "Alternatively, the attributes of OBJECT 12 may be configured as other OBJECTS,

which are logically related to OBJECT 12 via a RELATIONSHIP entity 14."); (col. 3 lines

27-33, "RELATIONSHIP entity 14 preferably contains attributes or fields which record

the name of RELATIONSHIP entity 14 represented by characters, the names or

identifiers, and types of OBJECTS 12 between which this relationship holds, a

sequence number to ensure the uniqueness of RELATIONSHIP entity 14, and the

name of a METHOD entity 16 which implements RELATIONSHIP 14."); (col. 4 lines

25-32, "Another OBJECT 12 is ENTITY 21, which is a logical collection of ATTRIBUTES

20. ENTITY 21 CONTAINS 22 ATTRIBUTE 20. CONTAINS relationship 22

documents the one-to-many relationship that each ENTITY 21 has with the attributes it

contains. This relationship along with the ATTRIBUTE name, serves to uniquely identify

each ATTRIBUTE.").

the definition further defining a set of operations for manipulating the data, the set

of operations defining programs that operate on the set of tables and the set of table

columns (col. 6 line 66 – col. 7 line 3, "The OBJECTS for an operational system's

information repository preferably include ATTRIBUTES (not shown), which contain the

data of interest to the enterprise. OPERATIONAL METHODS are the existing

application programs that display or update the operational data.").

However Smiley does not explicitly teach a method of the computer using the

definition to generate the set of tables.

Feuche teaches a method of the computer using the definition to generate the

set of tables (See for example: page 1, the last two paragraphs – page 2 line 1, wherein

the link's DB2 utilities automatically create DB2 entities. The link can automatically

create DB2 tables from logical record definitions.)

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to incorporate a method of the computer using the definition to

generate the set of tables as disclosed by Feuche into the system definition access as

taught in Smiley to eliminate the need to manually re-key design and data requirements,

thereby increasing productivity and reducing design discrepancies and system errors

(page 1 last paragraph – page 2 line 1). One of ordinary skill in the art would be

motivated to make the aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of

success.

Claim 2 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1 and

furthermore Smiley discloses a method wherein the set of tables includes a first table

and a second table, wherein the first table includes a first column, wherein the second

table includes a second column, and wherein the first column and the second column

are related by a join and are therefore guaranteed to be from the same domain (col. 6

lines 57-65, "FIG. 3 depicts application systems which function to support an enterprise.

These application systems are comprised of ATTRIBUTES 20 collected into ENTITIES

21. These ENTITIES 21, such as customer 60, account management 61, returned

material 62, sales order history 63, ship 64, product database 65, world wide price list

66, and inventory 67, are joined by relationship connections 68-73 which represent

operational or business rules, to form an operational system network.").

Claims 6, 26, 27 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given

above for claim 1.

Claim 10 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1 and

furthermore Smiley discloses a method wherein the definition defines a set of source

system extraction operations, wherein the set of source system extraction operations

are for extracting data from a source system and for manipulating the data for

populating the database, and wherein the set of source system extraction operations

correspond to 'the schema definition (col. 2 lines 50-53, "FIG. 4 is a diagram of an

application for accessing data from a number of data sources located on diverse

computer platforms employing the information repository scheme of the preferred

embodiment;"); (col. 5 lines 49-52, "INFORMATION 37 is a collection of ATTRIBUTES

20 and DATA FIELDS 30, possibly from many sources, that describes the enterprise or

some function of the enterprise."); (col. 5 lines 59-61, " Links 38-40 describes the

relationship between INFORMATION 37 and DATA FIELD 30, COLUMN 25, and

EXTERNAL SOURCES 36, respectively."): (col. 10 lines 40-49, " OBJECT definitions

for the decision support system information repository may include OPERATIONAL

DATA. OPERATIONAL DATA are data elements in operational data bases that are of

interest to their systems. OPERATIONAL METHODS are the existing application

programs that display or update the operational data accessed by the decision support

system. These may be used as part of the extract process, as a front-end to a

graphical user interface, or for ultimate update of the operational data in the originating

data base."); (col. 10 lines 51-55, "DSS METHODS differ from OPERATIONAL

METHODS in that they are unique to the decision support system (DSS), and which are

used to extract or manipulate the operational data in the DSS data base").

Claim 11 is rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for

claim 10.

Claim 17 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1 and

furthermore Smiley discloses a method wherein the definition includes a user interface

definition for to querying the database and for presenting results, the user interface

definition corresponding to the schema definition (col. 7 lines 38-40, "These METHOD

entities 14 can then be used as a front-end to a graphical user interface or may be

executed stand-alone to obtain the desired data."); (col. 10 lines 46-49 " These may be

used as part of the extract process, as a front-end to a graphical user interface, or for

ultimate update of the operational data in the originating data base."); (col. 13 lines 38-

43, "A user access services 118 provide repository users with the ability to retrieve,

browse, and update information repository data in text format. User access service 118

also functions as a front end to any graphical user interface which may be used for a

graphical representation of the data structure or network of information repository 10.");

(col. 5 lines 9-13, "TRANSLATES TO 28 is the basis for navigation from the data

abstraction level to the data implementation level, and is key to the process of querying

a data MODEL 23 to view data it represents."); (col. 7 lines 28-30, "Another example is

QUERY, which permits a user to find an instance of information in a relationship given

the other information and the relationship name."); (col. 12 line 64 – col. 13 line 1,

"Operational data acquisition is further supported via query services 105 in conjunction

with browsing and retrieval services 102 and 103. Query services 105 provide access

to the operational data represented in information repository 10.").

Claims 18 29, 36 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given

above for claim 17.

Claims 21-22, 30-31, 38-39 and 43-44 are rejected on grounds corresponding to

the reasons given above for claims 1-2.

3.   Claims 3, 5, 23, 25, 32, 34, 40, 42, 45 and 47 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341), further in

view of Feuche, ("Index interface links CASE and IBM's DB2"), and further in view of

Bapat, (U.S. Patent No. 5,295,256).

Claim 3 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1 and

furthermore Smiley teaches a method wherein the definition defines that the first table

relates to the second table by a many to one relationship (col. 3 lines 21-23, "Therefore,

there may exist one-to-one RELATIONSHIPS, one-to-many RELATIONSHIPS and

many-to-one RELATIONSHIP."). However the combination of Smiley and Feuche does

not explicitly teach ... generating a foreign key column ...

Bapat teaches generating a foreign key column (Abstract, "Object instances are mapped to entity tables with object instances represented by entity records. Simple attributes are mapped to primitive typed attribute columns and class valued attributes are represented by foreign keys into entity attribute tables. Derived attributes are represented by joins of the parent and child entity records."); (col. 7 lines 33-38, "Thus, this is considered a many to one (or N to 1) relationship as designated by the N and the 1 adjacent the arrows. This relationship can be represented by the class schema of FIG. 5 wherein class 80 is linked via a relationship 82 to class 84.").

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate foreign key generation as disclosed by Bapat into the table generation as taught in the combination of Smiley and Feuche in order to handle the many-to-one relationships. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of success.

Claim 5 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1. However the combination of Smiley and Feuche does not explicitly teach that one or more columns are automatically populated from the one or more columns ...

Bapat teaches that one or more columns are automatically populated from the one or more columns (col. 12 lines 50-55, "Next, at 434 the translator constructs "INSERT INTO class.sub.-- table" command with the insertion of the object identifier that will be generated, into the object identifier column of the current class in order to insert an actual instance of the current class into the table.").

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to incorporate column data population as disclosed by Bapat into

the table generation as taught in the combination of Smiley and Feuche in order to

automate the insertion of an actual instance of the current class into the table as stated

in Bapat col. 12, lines 54-55. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make

the aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of success.

Claims 23, 32, 40, 45 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons

given above for claim 3.

Claims 25, 34, 42, 47 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons

given above for claim 5.

4.   Claims 4, 7, 24, 33, 41 and 46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341) , further in view of Feuche,

("Index interface links CASE and IBM's DB2"), and further in view of Bachman et al.,

"Bachman " (U.S. Patent No. 5,249,300).

Claim 4 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1. However

the combination of Smiley and Feuche does not explicitly teach ... many to many

relationship, ... generating an associative table ... and ... a unique value ...

Bachman teaches ... many to many relationship, ... generating an associative

table ... and ... a unique value ... (col. 10 lines 58-63, "In the preferred system,

attributes may be created independent of entities. Using the partnership set protocols

described in U.S. Pat. No. 4,631,664, relationships may be one-to-one, one-to-many,

or many-to-many, depending upon the type and complexity of the system or model

created."); (col. 9 lines 53-57, "In the preferred embodiment of the system, unique keys

may represent one or more attributes, partnership sets, or a combination of both

attributes and partnership sets. Keys may be primary, alternate, or foreign.").

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to incorporate the use of associative table with a unique value as

disclosed by Bachman into the table generation as taught in the combination of Smiley

and Feuche in order to establish a recursive relationship or a relationship with another

entity or partnership set [herein many-to-many relationship is inherent] (col. 10 lines 1-

3). One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the aforementioned

combination with reasonable expectation of success.

Claim 7 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1. However

the combination of Smiley and Feuche does not explicitly teach a transaction type

column.

Bachman teaches a transaction type column (col. 23 line 68 – col. 24 line 6,

"Business transaction design data may correspond to transaction -related information,

such as rules of transactions which operate on entities, attributes, and relationships.

These rules may include processing algorithms, and may be stored internal to a

computer system. User data may then be transformed in accordance with the

transaction design data .").

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to incorporate the a transaction type column as disclosed by

Bachman into the table generation as taught in the combination of Smiley and Feuche in

order to include the design for business transactions in an information management system. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of success.

Claims 24, 33, 41, 46 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claim 4.

5.   Claim 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341), further in view of Feuche, ("Index interface links CASE and IBM's DB2"), and further in view of Skinner et al., "Skinner" (U.S. Patent No. 6,085,198).

Claim 8 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1. However the combination of Smiley and Feuche does not explicitly teach a date column.

Skinner teaches a date column (col. 19 lines 39-41, "MetaSchema 500 comprises a string data structure, "mySchemaVersion," that stores schema version information such as a version date .").

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a date column as disclosed by Skinner into the table generation as taught in the combination of Smiley and Feuche in order to be able to store dates in the database, which is a common need in any database management system. One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of success.

6.   Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341), further in view of Feuche, ("Index interface links CASE and

IBM's DB2"), and further in view of Rosensteel, Jr. et al., "Rosensteel" (U.S. Patent No. 6,167,405).

Claim 9 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1. However the combination of Smiley and Feuche does not explicitly teach a source system key column.

Rosensteel teaches a source system key column (col. 27 lines 47-56, "during the design phase, generating and storing in the repository, information defining reference links between each target data warehouse table and the source tables from which instances must be extracted, identification of the source databases and target database, reference links between corresponding portions of the source and target tables, and identification of those warehouse request entities related to a number of target tables to be populated by a particular warehouse request;"); (col. 19 lines 41-44, "It also returns the database key of the 'Source Agent Server for the 'Source database in argument IngAgentId.").

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a source system key column as disclosed by Rosensteel into the table generation as taught in the combination of Smiley and Feuche in order for the administrator to perform a series of data model extract and merge operations on the source databases to obtain entities, relationships and attributes which are relevant to the particular target data model design (col. 10 lines 59-63). One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of success.

7.   Claims 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as

being unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341), further in view of Feuche,

("Index interface links CASE and IBM's DB2"), and further in view of Koss (U.S. Patent

No. 5,272,628).

Claim 12 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1. However

the combination of Smiley and Feuche does not explicitly teach a method comprising:

... creating a set of aggregate tables ...; and populating the set of aggregate tables.

Koss teaches a method comprising: ... creating a set of aggregate tables ... and

populating the set of aggregate tables (col. 2 lines 31-34, "The present invention

contemplates a method and system which allows the consolidation or aggregation of

data in disparate tables into a single aggregate table which summarizes that data.");

(col. 2 lines 60-64, "In contrast, the present invention provides an improved method and

system wherein source tables of virtually any size and configuration may be combined

in an aggregate table based on user-defined, or automatically generated criteria."); (col.

4 lines 60-64, "In the preferred practice of the present invention, a mapping list is used

to map source table row and columns to corresponding destination output (or

aggregate) table row and columns."); (col. 7 lines 21-23, "For example, to average

values, two tables can be used, one for holding a cumulative sum, and one to contain

the count of elements contributing to the sum ....").

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to incorporate the method of creating and populating aggregate

tables as disclosed by Koss into the table generation as taught in the combination of

Smiley and Feuche because occasionally, it is desirable to combine the data contained

in multiple tables into a single master table [equivalent to an aggregate table] (col. 1

lines 31-32). One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the

aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of success.

Claims 13, 14, 15, 16 and 28 are rejected on grounds corresponding to the

reasons given above for claim 12.

Claim 19 is rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for

claims 10, 12 and 17.

8.   Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smiley

(U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341), further in view of Feuche, ("Index interface links CASE and

IBM's DB2"), and further in view of Tse et al., "Tse" (U.S. Patent No. 6,282,544).

Claim 20 is rejected for the reasons set forth hereinabove for claim 1. However

the combination of Smiley and Feuche does not explicitly teach a datamart... a star

schema ...fact tables ... and ...dimension tables.

Tse teaches a datamart... a star schema ...fact tables ... and ...dimension tables

...(col. 1 lines 21-32, "One of the first steps in building a successful data mart is to

correctly identify the different dimensions and the fact set within a business structure.

This is often known as dimension modeling. Each dimension represents a collection of

unique entities that participate in the fact set independent of entities from another

dimension . The fact set usually contains transactional data where each transaction (or

record) is identified by a combination of entities one from each dimension . FIG. 1

shows a star schema for a supermarket business where the star schema is the outcome of the dimension modeling process.");

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate a datamart, a star schema, fact tables and dimension tables as disclosed by Tse into the database system as taught in the combination of Smiley and Feuche because a data mart [wherein a star schema, fact tables and dimension tables are common components] is a database, or collection of databases, designed to help managers make strategic decisions about their business (col. 1 lines 8-11).

One of ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to make the aforementioned combination with reasonable expectation of success.

9.   Claim 35 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341), further in view of Feuche, ("Index interface links CASE and IBM's DB2"), further in view of Bapat, (U.S. Patent No. 5,295,256), and further in view of Koss (U.S. Patent No. 5,272,628).

Claim 35 is rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claims 34 and 12.

10.   Claim37 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smiley (U.S. Patent No. 6,263,341), further in view of Feuche, ("Index interface links CASE and IBM's DB2"), further in view of Koss (U.S. Patent No. 5,272,628), and further in view of Bachman et al., "Bachman " (U.S. Patent No. 5,249,300).

Claim 37 is rejected on grounds corresponding to the reasons given above for claims 33 and 12.

(11)   **Response to argument**

The examiner will address the issues raised by the appellant in the order in which they appear in the Appeal Brief.

Claim grouping: 1

Remark

(A)   Appellants asserted that Claim1 does not recite "an automated process" as stated by the examiner that "Feuche clearly teaches an automated process.". The examiner did not state that Claim 1 recited "an automated process". In response to the applicant's arguments (page 13 in Amendment A, paper number 9, filed on 4/16/2003) regarding that presumably, in Smiley, the data tables are generated the old fashioned way, by a human programmer writing executable code by hand and that clearly Smiley does not disclose "the computer using the definition to generate the set of tables", the examiner further clarified the reasons for the ground of rejections by stating that the Feuche combined into Smiley clearly teach an automated process of creating a set of database tables using the definitions as claimed in the applicant's invention (final office action, paper number 10, page 17). The "automated process" in Feuche was used to show an analogy between the prior art (Smiley and Feuche) and the claimed limitation "the computer accessing a definition".

(B)   Appellants asserted that the Feuche reference neither discloses nor suggests a

computer that generates tables from definitions that define "a set of relationships

between tables and programs that operate on the set of tables and the set of table

columns," as recited in claim 1 and that Smiley's system and Feuche's system, even

when combined, neither teach nor suggest a computer that generates tables from

definitions that define "a set of relationships between tables and programs that operate

on the set of tables and the set of table columns," as recited in claim 1. The examiner

disagrees with this assertion. As reasons stated in paper number 10, the examiner

went through the claims phrase by phrase and referred to the prior art column and line

number as to where she has drawn the correspondences between the applicant's claim

phrases and prior art. The Feuche reference teaches a computer that generates tables

from logical record definitions (See for example: page 1, the last two paragraphs – page

2 line 1, wherein the link's DB2 utilities automatically create DB2 entities. The link can

automatically create DB2 tables from logical record definitions.) It is obvious that the

link's DB2 utilities are run from a computer because it is used as a an interface to create

DB2 tables from definitions created in Excelerator. The interface eliminates the need to

manually re-key design and data requirements. It is also obvious that when the link's

DB2 utilities are run from a computer, the computer then accessing and using the

logical definitions to generate the set of tables. Although it should be obvious to one

having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to recognize that the

logical definitions taught in Feuche would include the same types of definitions as

claimed in the applicant's invention, the Feuche reference does not disclose the logical

definitions in the level of detail as claimed in the applicant's invention. The Smiley

reference, however, fully disclose those definitions, especially definitions that define a

set of relationships between the tables (See for example: col. 3 lines 8-11, col. 3 lines

27-33, col. 4 lines 25-32) and programs that operate on the set of tables and the set of

table columns (See for example: col. 6 line 66 – col. 7 line 3). In conclusion, with the

Smiley reference teaching the definition as recited in claim1 and the Feuche reference

teaching the computer accessing and using the definition as taught in Smiley to

generate the set of tables, the examiner maintains that the combination of Smiley and

Feuche does teach a computer that generates tables from definitions that define "a set

of relationships between tables and programs that operate on the set of tables and the

set of table columns," as recited in claim 1.

Conclusion

The examiner would like to direct the Honorable Board of Appeal's attention to the fact

that the appellants misread and misinterpreted tha teachings detailed in Smiley and

Feuche. It is therefore, clear that the cited references disclose the compensation of

functional differences as broadly claimed.

For the above reasons, it is believed that the rejections should be sustained.

Respectfully submitted,

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April 13, 2004

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